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ABSTRACT

This learning unit on supervising with authority is one in the Choice Series, a self-learning development program for supervisors. Purpose stated for the approximately eight-hour-long unit is to enable the supervisor to define authority, distinguish between different types of authority, and use authority more effectively in the workplace. An introduction provides an overview of the unit and lists unit objectives. Parts A through C contain informative material, activities and answer keys, self-checks and answer keys, and a summary. Topics include authority, kinds of authority, and using one's authority. Part D contains performance checks--an end check to be completed alone and a tutor check and work-based project. Part E consists of a brief unit review, extensions (print sources of additional information, such as units or sections in books), and a list of references. (YLB)

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An Open Tech Project

SUPERVISING

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF SUPERVISION

18: Supervising with Authority

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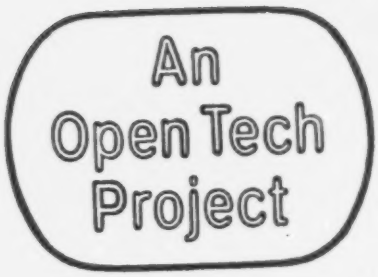
18: SUPERVISING WITH AUTHORITY

Henry McLaughlin



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McLaughlin Henry
Supervising with Authority (Number 18 in the CHOICE SERIES of learning units)

Series Editor: Harry V Pardue
Northern Regional Management Centre.

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WORKING GUIDE TO THIS UNIT IN YOUR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

This Unit is now your personal property - it's not for handing back to your training officer or to a tutor. It is your working book.

The Contents will increase in value to you each time you write on one of its pages. This is a working text for your personal notes - without notes its value is limited.

Qualifications forget about certificates and diplomas - you don't need them for this programme. What you do need is the wish:-

* to do your job better
* for personal development

Your study time is really up to you - we guess you will need about 8 hours in total. But it's your time - spend as long as you like.

How am I doing? you can judge for yourself by checking out how well you cope with the tasks we call Activities and Self Checks which occur throughout the unit. You can also get the Tutor Check and/or the Work Based Project to your tutor for an unbiased view of your progress.

Work Pace it's really up to you and depends on your interest. However, if you do well on the Activities and Self Checks, you could afford to speed up a little. Of course, if you don't do as well as you expect then you could slow down a little or flick back into the unit for a quick review of the more difficult ideas.

When in doubt - ask or seek help from:

* your family and friends
* colleagues at work
* your company training staff
* other open learners
* your tutor, by phone, by a visit to your support centre or by dropping your tutor a line through the post.

Don't worry if what you learn doesn't seem to be of use to you now, remember that times change - it may be useful one day. Anyway, just knowing more improves personal confidence.

So now make a start:-

18: SUPERVISING WITH AUTHORITY by Henry McLaughlin

ABOUT THIS UNIT

When you were first promoted to a supervisor you became part of the world of management. You probably felt good about your promotion, a position of prestige, recognition from management and, of course, an increase in salary.

However, from your first day in the job, you will have realised the responsibilities you have taken on. Problems come thick and fast, situations require immediate action, someone always seems to want a decision and wants it now.

The job of supervisor is NOT in reality as easy as many people believe it to be. Sometimes you wish you could return to your old job.

So what's the basic difference between the two jobs?

In your old job you could get on with your work and let everyone else get on with theirs. Now you are responsible for the work of a number of people in your workteam. They expect you to make decisions and to direct them by giving orders and instructions. You now have AUTHORITY over your workteam.

IN THIS UNIT WE WILL

* identify what authority means
* look at different types of authority
* examine how you might adapt your approach to different situations

AUDIO TAPE Side 1

Before you continue through the unit, you should listen to side 1 of the audio tape that accompanies the unit. You will find it useful if you refer to the unit objectives shown below whilst you listen to the tape. You may wish to make the objectives clearer to yourself by making a note or two on the page as you listen.

OBJECTIVES

On completion of this unit you will be BETTER ABLE TO:

* define authority
* explain the 'limits of authority' imposed on you as supervisor in your organisation
* distinguish between official, specialist and personal authority
* use authority more effectively in your workplace.

PART A AUTHORITY

1 Introduction

When you took on the job of supervisor you will have accepted a whole new range of responsibilities which arise from the fact that you are now involved in making decisions which affect the members of your workteam. To be able to meet your responsibilities you need authority.

In this part of the unit we will discuss the meaning of authority, where it comes from and the limits within which you as a supervisor must operate.

2 The meaning of authority

As a supervisor you have taken the first steps into management. You have been given a position of responsibility and as a result find that you have authority over the workteam under your control.

ACTIVITY 1
Time guide
2 mins

Spend a few moments thinking about what the word 'authority' means to you and jot down what you think it is.

* _____

_____

_____

You may have said somthing like:

Authority is the right to make decisions and direct your workteam.

Let's break this down into simpler stages.

We could say this involves three stages.

Authority is

* the right to decide
* the right to command
* the right to enforce

Let's now analyse each of these individually.

2.1 The right to decide

As supervisor you will be responsible for a number of activities which will require frequent decisions. For example

- selecting the best member of your workteam for a particular job

- deciding how to motivate your workteam

- deciding when discipline procedures should be enforced

- allocating jobs to your workteam

And we could think of many more examples of decisions for which you might be responsible.

The important point is:

* if the task is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY then YOU MUST DECIDE what has to be done

Of course, not all decisions are easy to make.

You may feel that you need more information or advice but the situation demands that you make a decision there and then - to maintain workflow perhaps. Or you may have to make a decision which you know will be unpopular.

Nevertheless, the decisions have to be made - they are a responsibility of the job.

ACTIVITY 2
Time guide
3 mins

Think for a few moments about the kinds of decisions you have to make at work. Make a list of at least three parts of your job which demand that you make decisions.

eg * allocating work to your workteam

* training

* _____

* _____

* _____

My list would include:

* allocating work to your workteam
* training
* motivating your workteam
* discipline
* organising work
* safety
* maintenance
* work schedules
* ordering supplies

You may well have included other items and you may feel that you would not have responsibility for some of the items on my list - it all depends on your particular job.

The point is that it's quite useful sometimes to stand back from the job and consider

"What exactly am I responsible for and can I make decisions about?"

Now let's have a look at the second stage of authority.

2.2 The right to command

This may seem a very strong, forceful statement. Put more simply it is the right to give ORDERS and INSTRUCTIONS to your workteam.

As supervisor your position of authority gives you this right. Whether or not your workteam obey your orders or carry out your instructions is another matter.

The way you approach the situation and your relationship with the individual concerned may have some effect on this.

(We will deal with this in more detail in PART C.)

Your position of authority in the organisation gives you the right to issue orders and instructions to members of your workteam and you in turn expect that the workteam should obey these orders.

2.3 The right to enforce

Sometimes when you have reached a decision and issued instructions your workteam may disagree and try to resist what you want to do.

Although it may be difficult to persuade them that you are right, your authority gives you the right to insist that your instructions be followed.

Of course, a good supervisor will not totally ignore any comments made by the workteam. It may be that you have overlooked some points and that suggestions made by members of the workteam may be better than yours.

Sometimes it may be necessary to explain why you want things done your way. This will improve the workteam's cooperation, whereas a direct order without explanation may be resented by the workteam.

ACTIVITY 3
Time guide
2 mins

Look at the following situation.

Two members of your workteam continually argue and bicker with one another. It appears that there is a personality clash and that each of them is always looking for an opportunity to blame the other when things go wrong.

Realising that the situation is affecting the morale of others in the workteam you decide to separate the two people involved so that they need not have any direct contact and allocate them to different jobs.

So you have used the first stage of your authority - the right to decide.

Having made your decisions, what do you have to do next?

* _____

_____

_____

You would have to tell the people involved of your decision and instruct them in the new jobs you want each of them to do.

Thus you would be using your right to command - the second stage of your authority. And if you met any resistance or objections to your decision then you might use the third stage - the right to enforce - and insist that they did as you said.

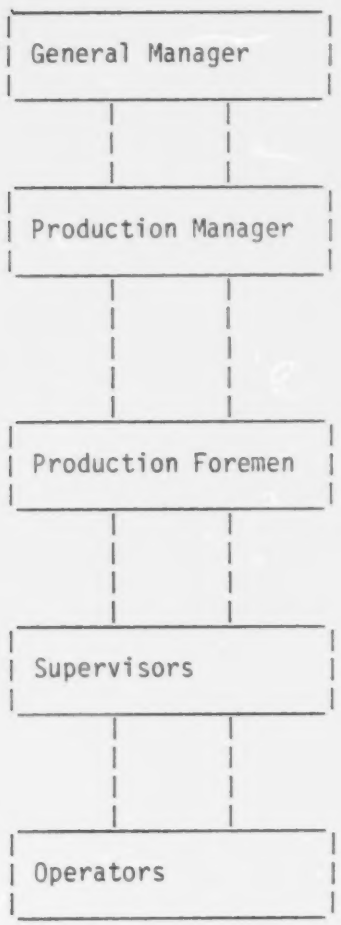
So we've established that the job of supervisor is a position of authority in the organisation. That authority is something which comes automatically as part of the job: it is not something which you earn or acquire but is given to you by higher management. This is known as delegation.

3 Delegation

REFERENCE 1
page 71

As a business grows it becomes impossible for whoever is in charge to cope with all the activities. He has to decide which of the activities could be done better by someone else and then appoint somebody to make the decisions, give the orders and generally make sure those activities are carried out. In other words, AUTHORITY has to be passed down to somebody else in the organisation.

This happens at a number of levels so that typically an organisation will look something like this diagram.



Can't do everything himself so delegates to various managers

One of the management team. Carries out the policy as it applies to production only. Delegates authority to foremen. Is responsible to the General Manager.

Carry out the production policy for each section but delegate authority to supervisors. Responsible to Production Manager.

Carry out production policy for their sections but delegate specific tasks to operators. Responsible to foremen.

Carry out tasks given by supervisors. Responsible to supervisors.

You can see that authority is delegated down throughout the organisation and is shown by the arrows which come down vertically from one level to the next.

But you'll notice that there are also arrows going vertically back UP the diagram to successively higher levels.

ACTIVITY 4
Time guide
2 mins

What do you think the arrows going vertically UP the diagram represent?

* _____

* _____

_____

They represent RESPONSIBILITY.

Authority can be delegated: responsibility cannot.

You can delegate a task to somebody and give them the authority to take the decisions to get the job done.

But the RESPONSIBLITY for the job actually being carried out still remains with you. And the same is true all the way up the organisation.

As you see from the diagram superviors are able to delegate authority to members of their workteams.

If we take a rather extreme view, two things can happen here.

* Over-delegation - the supervisor seeks every opportunity to pass things onto the workteam, usually so that he doesn't have to do it himself

* Under-delegation - the supervisor is unwilling to let someone else do the job and finds that he is doing everything himself

---

ACTIVITY 5
Time guide
3 mins

Jot down some of the things which are likely to happen if a supervisor over-delegates or under-delegates.

Over-delegation _____

_____

_____

Under-delegation _____

_____

_____

_____

A supervisor who 'over-delegates' often finds that his workteam resent the number of things they are given to do. They feel that they are being used or overloaded with tasks which are not really their responsibility. Sometimes a member of the workteam may not know how to perform a particular task but having completed it to the best of their ability it may still not be good enough.

In this situation things usually start to go wrong and the supervisor tries to blame the operator.

The supervisor cannot escape responsibility when things go wrong. If authority had been used properly the supervisor would have made sure that the operator had both the time and the ability to carry out the task properly.

Although the supervisor has the right to delegate authority, responsibility will pass back to the supervisor if the work is not done properly. A supervisor is not expected to do everything but to see that things get done properly and on time.

It's just as bad to under-delegate.

It means that the supervisor is carrying out duties which should be dealt with by the workteam and has very little time to spend on supervision.

Operators in the workteam become afraid to use their initiative and leave all decisions to the supervisor. The workteam will wait for instructions on the simplest of tasks. Seldom will they contribute any ideas or suggest improvements which would be of benefit to the organisation.

The workteam will feel 'stifled' by a lack of trust in their abilities.

It's not uncommon for supervisors to be afraid to use the right of delegation which they've been given with the job.

There are two major reasons for this.

* The supervisor is insecure and is reluctant to let others do certain tasks in case they appear to be better than the supervisor.

* The supervisor does not believe that the operator is capable of completing the task.

So a good supervisor must strike a balance between the two extremes of delegating too much and not delegating enough. This means delegating whenever necessary whilst being aware that they alone hold responsibility and making sure that the person given the task has the time and the ability to carry it out.

This allows the supervisor the time to concentrate on other things and improves the confidence of the operator who feels he is being trusted to do an important job and being allowed to use his own judgement.

ACTIVITY 6
Time guide
5 mins

Take a few minutes to study the following situation.

Sheila Brown, who is supervisor in the accounts section of Provincial Insurance, devotes a considerable amount of time to producing accounts. Sheila is in charge of a team of 20 which includes typists, clerks and juniors. They seem to require her constant attention.

John Boyce, the office manager, is concerned about complaints that some of the work coming from Sheila's department is of poor quality. Many errors resulting in overpayment of some accounts and underpayment of others have occurred in the last month.

A discussion between Sheila and John brought out the following points:

(a) Sheila spends one third of her time processing accounts

(b) She also pitches in, whenever necessary, if work is behind schedule

(c) She helps out when people are late for work

(d) As the most experienced member of the Department it was quicker for her to take over some tasks than to stand over someone else making sure things are done properly

Do you consider that Sheila

(a) uses authority properly?

(b) over-delegates?

(c) under-delegates?

Jot down some of the ways in which you think the department would benefit if Sheila concentrated on her supervisory role.

* _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

I hope we can agree that under-delegation is Sheila's major problem.

Sheila spends most of her time carrying out task which could be done by somebody else and she prefers to do things herself rather than show other people how to do them.

If Sheila were to delegate more tasks:

* the department would operate more efficiently because team members would be more experienced

* the workteam's confidence would improve

* individuals would show more initiative

* the work of the other sections in the department would be better supervised

Getting the balance right isn't always easy but it is important. If you delegate you should find that your workteam are more co-operative, they feel trusted and develop more respect for the supervisor.

And the supervisor in turn has more time to study work schedules, plan future work and deal with personal problems as they arise.

4 Responsibility

Let's look for a moment at precisely what we mean by 'responsibility'.

We use the word in all sorts of ways at work. Here are two examples:

"Fred is responsible for housekeeping in the loading bay."

"The Accounts Department are responsible for all invoices sent out."

ACTIVITY 7
Time guide
2 mins

From these two statements, we can identify certain parts of the jobs done by Fred and the Accounts Department.

What are they?

Fred

* _____

Accounts Department

* _____

_____

We can say that part of Fred's job is to look after housekeeping in the loading bay and that anything to do with invoices sent out is the job of the Accounts Department.

In other words, they 'carry the can' for these particular jobs and, if there is any problem, they are the ones who will be called to account.

This responsibility is often called 'accountability' and it's very important to know exactly what you are accountable for.

ACTIVITY 8
Time guide
2 mins

Anna has been a data control clerk for three weeks, having taken over from somebody who has now left. On Friday, the data processing supervisor rushes into her office and says:

'Why weren't the amendments to the fittings update done yesterday? The regional offices are screaming for it.'

Anna was at a loss. 'I'm sorry, I didn't know anything about it.'

'Didn't know? You should do. You're responsible for the fittings update, aren't you?

How would knowing precisely what she was accountable for have helped Anna in this situation?

* _____

_____

_____

_____

Knowing what she was accountable for would help Anna plan her workload and make sure that she had actually done what she was supposed to or, if she couldn't do it, that she had training and support until she could. It would also, of course, have saved her from an upsetting situation at work.

For a supervisor it's equally important to know that you actually have the authority for the jobs for which you have the responsibility otherwise you may feel you are trying to do the job with both hands tied behind your back.

So we can understand by 'responsibility' - accountability - what I carry the can for.

But now let's look at two more statements which are also talking about responsibility.

"No, I'd better tell him. It's my responsibility."

"I'm responsible for making sure that the workteam gets on well together."

Here, it isn't nearly so easy as it was in our two previous statements, to tell anything about the jobs in question or about what can reasonably be expected of the people talking. (It would be very hard to call somebody to account for, say, a disagreement between two members of a workteam over something outside work.)

So in these two examples, 'responsibility' means the feeling that you are obliged to do something about certain situations because you are involved and hold a responsible position. (See how that word 'responsible' creeps in again!)

We can say that it's to do with having a serious and committed attitude to the job and exactly how we see that will depend very much on our own personality and may well go beyond the basic requirements of the job.

So though we can distinguish between

ACCOUNTABILITY - the parts of the job for which we can be called to account

and

RESPONSIBILITY - a felt obligation towards the job

we tend to use the word 'responsibility' in some form (eg I'm responsible; a responsible attitude) to mean both in ordinary conversation and that is the sense in which it's used in this unit.

5 Levels of Authority

In the diagram on page 6 we saw how authority passes down through the organisation from the General Manager to the Operators, with each manager having authority over the one below and being responsible to the one above.

This is known as the 'line of control' in the organisation and is the means by which decisions made at the top level are eventually carried out.

In such a situation each manager holds a different level of authority from any other.

For example, the Managing Director has authority over all activities and functions of the organisation. As he cannot be expected to do everything himself he delegates some of this authority to specialists like the production manager, the accountant or the marketing manager.

The Managing Director still retains responsibility for all of these functions and has the authority to instruct each member of his management team about their function.

On the other hand, the production manager has authority only for production. Finance and marketing are not things that are directly involved in the production process. The production manager has authority to organise production so that the output required can be achieved. This may involve dividing work into specialist sections and appointing someone to deal with each section (for example, a foreman).

While the production manager is responsible for the whole production unit the foreman is responsible for only that specialist section which he is in charge of.

Each section may be sub-divided and supervisors appointed to control the various workteams.

This ensures that each person in the organisation is responsible to only one boss. At each level of management there is just one person in charge, just one person to whom the individual below is responsible and just one person to direct his work.

This establishes what's known as

A CHAIN OF COMMAND

or

A LINE OF CONTROL

from top to bottom of the organisation.

Let's look at how this works in practice.

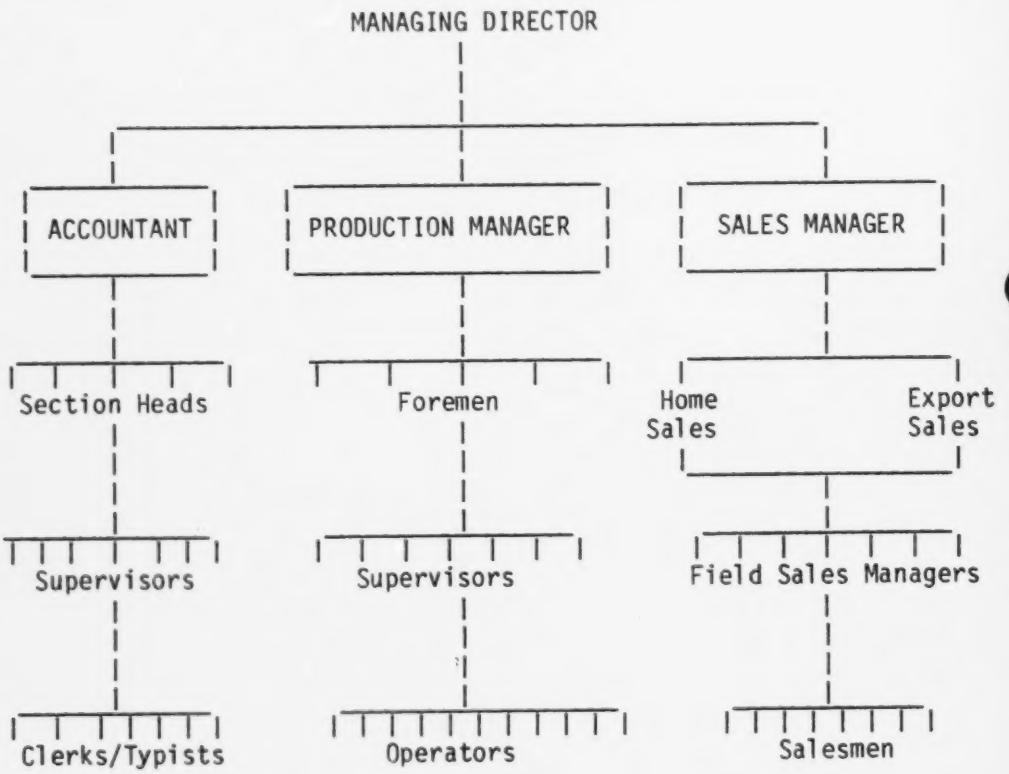
ACTIVITY 9
Time guide
5 mins

Below is a simple organisation structure of a production firm.

The firm has three main functions - Production
- Sales
- Accounts

and is controlled by the Managing Director.

LINE ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



(a) How many levels of management are shown in the diagram?

* _____

(b) How does the Managing Director control the sales effort of an individual salesman?

* _____

_____

(c) Does the Sales Manager have any authority over the operators?

* _____

(a) There are four levels of management shown in the diagram:

* supervisors/field sales managers

* section heads/foremen

* functional managers (accounts, production and sales)

* managing director

You might have wondered about the fact that there are some different names at the same level, eg section heads/foreman. This is merely tradition of some sections in industry. A foreman is regarded to be an industrial section head while the person in charge of an office prefers a different title and is sometimes referred to as head of section or office manager.

(b) The managing director controls the efforts of individual salesmen by delegating authority to the sales manager who, in turn, has a team of field sales managers who are responsible for the operations of salesmen.

(c) The sales manager has no authority over operators. Operators are part of the production process and as such are directed by the supervisor to whom they are responsible.

So, we've seen that within an organisation there are different levels of authority and at each higher level authority is wider than at levels below.

A supervisor's authority is limited to matters which affect the workteam or, in other words, limited to what is necessary to meet the responsibilities of the job.

Once again, it's a question of striking the right balance. Too little authority may mean you're not able to get the job done: too much means you may have to make decisions which could be made better by somebody else which isn't fair to you or efficient in terms of what the organisation is trying to achieve.

Let's have a closer look at what we mean by limits of authority.

6 Limits of Authority

We've already agreed that being made supervisor means that some authority is delegated to you by higher management and that that authority gives you the right to decide, command and enforce in order to meet the responsibilities of the job.

Hopefully, the manager who delegated authority to you, will have given some thought to the duties and responsibilities of your job and delegated you the authority you need to carry them out. He will probably have outlined at some stage:

* what you CAN do

* what you CAN'T do

- in other words, the 'limits of your authority'.

(Or you may have found out the hard way!)

By telling you what you cannot do the manager is telling you how far your authority extends. As supervisor you cannot make decisions or direct people outside this boundary. Should the work require a decision which is outside the limit of your authority then you must seek direction from the manager.

Let's look at some situations which may help illustrate the limits of authority imposed on a supervisor.

RESPONSIBILITY	AUTHORITY
Discipline	- to issue reprimand or verbal warning
Training	- to instruct employees in necessary job skills
Safety	- to ensure safe equipment
	- to ensure clean, tidy workplace
	- to instruct workteam in safety procedures
Ordering	- to place orders for materials up to the value of £100
Work organisation	- to decide the tasks allocated to each member of the workteam
Production	- to see that production targets are achieved

In each case the authority of the supervisor has been defined.

For example

Discipline	The supervisor is allowed, where he feels it necessary to give a reprimand or verbal warning. If the offence is such that stronger action is necessary then the supervisor must report to a higher authority. The supervisor has reached the 'limits of authority'.
Ordering	The supervisor can place orders up to £100 in value. If orders required are more than this then the supervisor must report to a higher authority. Again the 'limits of authority' have been reached and the supervisor will have to seek authorisation elsewhere.

ACTIVITY 10
Time guide
5 mins

Assume that you have the responsibility and authority shown in the chart on the previous page.

You've given a lot of thought to the various stages by which work is carried out and you feel sure that a change in the present routine would cut out one stage and increase production output.

Would you have the authority to change the present routine?

How far would your authority extend in this situation?

* _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

I hope we can agree that, in this situation you would not have the authority to change the normal production routine.

We can see from the chart that, in this instance, your authority extends only to allocating particular tasks to individuals and ensuring that the work is carried out. The way that work is set up is not directly your responsiblitiy.

However, if you felt that production targets could be met more easily or better use made of your workteam's time, by introducing a change, then you should consult your manager and ask for clearance to try out your idea.

If your suggestion could improve the process without breaking regulations or affecting costs or staffing levels, then you might get permission to put it into action.

So we can sum up by saying:

* Only make decisions within the limits of the authority delegated to you

* If the decision you need to make is outside this limit, consult your manager

Before moving on to PART B maybe you would like to checkout some points already covered.

Here is a self-check question which will help test your understanding of the unit so far.

SELF CHECK 1
Time guide
3 mins

Decide whether the follwing two statements are TRUE or FALSE.

(a) A supervisor is a part of management.

TRUE/FALSE

(b) A supervisor has complete authority over the workteam.

TRUE/FALSE

Respond by completing each sentence with a suitable word or words.

(c) A supervisor must operate within the _____.

(d) Authority is _____ to supervisors by management.

(e) In the organisation there are different _____ of authority.

Respond to the following by selecting which ONE answer you feel is most correct.

(f) Under-delegation is usually a sign of

(i) superiority
(ii) security
(iii) insecurity
(iv) weakness

The answer to this self check is here in the following words, so you'll need to check out your answers carefully. (a) Supervisors are often referred to as first-line managers. Management involves directing people towards the achievement of some goal. Supervisors direct their workteam in order to achieve the output required of their section, or to ensure that work is completed on time. Therefore supervisors manage and as such are a definite part of the management process. (b) A supervisor's authority is delegated from the manager. The extent of authority given will be sufficient to enable the supervisor to carry out the responsibilities of the job. The manager retains the right to make certain decisions and by doing so restricts the supervisor's authority. This means that there are 'limits' to what the supervisor may or may not do and this statement is therefore false. (c) The authority of a supervisor is restricted by those things delegated by management. Although supervisors have the right to make decisions and direct members of their workteam this does not mean that they can do what they like. They must operate within the 'limits of authority' delegated by management. They can make some decisions but in some other situations will have to seek guidance from the manager. A

suitable answer is 'limits of authority'. (d) It is not possible for any person to do everything in an organisation, so some jobs are passed on to other people. If these jobs are to be completed effectively then the individual responsible will require authority. Management delegate authority to supervisors so that the supervisor can meet their responsibilities. It means that the supervisor has been given the right to make decisions. This is called delegation. You might also have used the term 'handed-down' but the usual term is delegated. (e) In any organisation there are a number of grades of manager. The managing director is the most senior manager while the supervisor is regarded as a junior or fist-line manager. In between there may be various management positions. Each manager has authority but can exercise more control than the manager below in the organisation structure. This is referred to as level of authority in the organisation. The higher up in the structure you are, the higher your level of authority. (f) Supervisors who under-delegate will find that they do most of the actual work themselves. This tends to happen most when the supervisor is afraid that a member of the workteam will do the job better. Rather than be shown to be inferior to the operator the supervisor will restrict the operators to simple tasks and carry out all other tasks themeselves. This is a sure sign that the supervisor is insecure and afraid that someone else in the workteam may take over the supervisory role. Therefore (iii) insecurity is the most correct choice. In some situations a supervisor may reserve certain duties in order to appear superior or more important. The need to show this is in itself a sign of insecurity.

7 Summary

* Authority is necessary to meet the responsibilities of the job.
* Authority means
  - the right to decide
  - the right to command
  - the right to enforce
* Authority is delegated down through the organisation from the top: a supervisor's authority is delegated by his manager
* Supervisors need to delegate to members of their workteam
* Every level of manager in the organisation has authority, but everyone's authority is limited in some way
* Only the Managing Director has total authority
* A supervsior must always act within the 'limits of authority' delegated by management
* Though authority CAN be delegated, responsibility CANNOT.

PART B TYPES OF AUTHORITY

1 Introduction

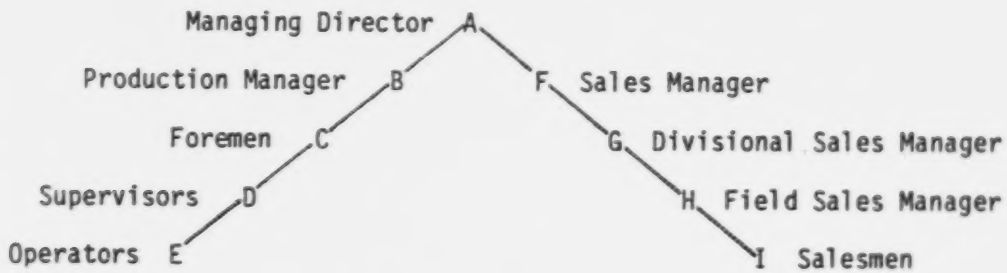
In PART A we looked at what we mean by authority and at how it is delegated from one level of manager to another. Now we need to look at how authority itself can be broken down into different types. For instance, your position in the organisation gives you the authority you need to meet the responsibilities of your job: this is your OFFICIAL authority. But in addition to that you may also have SPECIALIST authority and PERSONAL authority.

So let's examine each of these in detail and see how you may use them to your advantage at work.

2 Official or Structural Authority

Official authority comes automatically with the job. There may be limits which you should know about but nevertheless you will have to make decisions and direct other people if you are to achieve the results expected of you.

Typically, official authority will be delegated like this.



The Managing Director will delegate authority to the Production Manager and the Sales Manager and they in turn will delegate responsibility down the line (B to C, C to D, D to E and F to G, G to H, H to I).

This principle, or a variation of it has been adapted and practised by most business organisations.

So that:

* one person is in complete control
* there are various levels of managers each with official authority which they can delegate to the person below
* the level of authority each manager has is determined by the position in the chain of command

ACTIVITY 11
Time guide
5 mins

Tom Smith is a foreman in the production unit of 'Wear Well' Fashions. He controls 10 supervsiors who each supervise 20 operators. So Tom has 210 people below him in the organisation.

Jot down five aspects of the job which Tom could give the supervisors official authority for.

* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____

The most likely things for which the supervisors will need official authority are:

* training
* discipline
* allocating tasks
* work schedules
* safety
* maintenance
* records and reports
* grievances
* morale
* quality of goods

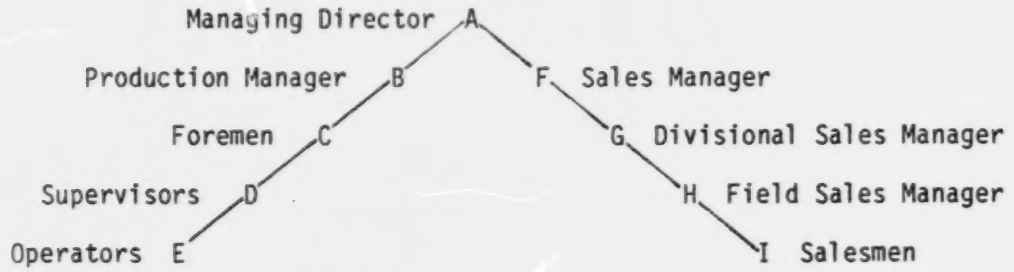
You may well have thought of more.

Anything which the foreman has authority for himself could be delegated to the supervisor. The foreman will still have to accept responsibility if things go wrong. Remember although authority can be delegated, responsiblity cannot.

So, if Tom delegates authority for training to the supervisors and later finds that the operators are not doing things properly then Tom himself is to blame. He hasn't supervised training to ensure it was adequate or, perhaps, he made a bad choice of who should do the training in the first place.

There's one important thing we have to remember about official authority and that is who it extends to.

If you look at this diagram of an organisation again, you can see that the sales side and the production side are not connected to each other except that they are both responsible, in the end, to the Managing Director.



ACTIVITY 12
Time guide
3 mins

Suppose the field sales manager receives orders for more goods than the production unit can currently produce in a week and that if he can satisfy these orders then customers will maintain this level for future orders.

Who would the field sales manager have to ask to step up production?

* _____

According to the diagram, production and sales are separate functions with different lines of control and neither has any official authority to instruct the other.

In the present line of control the field sales manager will have to make his request through his divisional manager, who in turn will ask the sales manager who will ask the managing director. The managing director can then decide whether production would be increased or not, and if so instruct the production manager who will pass instruction down the line so that enough goods are produced to satisfy the orders received.

This is obviously slow and long winded.

In practice, you need cooperation between the two functions to exchange ideas and solve problems but any proposals they come up with must be approved by the individual managers responsible. So adjusting production quickly to meet the increased orders probably depends on a 'bridge' between the field sales managers and the supervisors, but the actual decisions would have to be made by the divisional sales manager and foremen at least.

EXTENSION 1
page 69

ACTIVITY 13
Time guide
5 mins

Jot down three advantages of being able to 'bridge' to another function and deal directly with your opposite number, bypassing the official line of authority.

* _____

* _____

* _____

Being able to deal directly with your opposite number in another function:

* often saves time

* avoids misunderstanding of facts

* creates a better understanding of each other's jobs

* often means that you both actively agree with and support changes proposed

But whatever you propose MUST be referred to a higher level of management for the decision actually to be taken.

3 Specialist Authority

REFERENCE 2
page 71

This means the kind of authority you have because you have specialist knowledge and experience which, perhaps, nobody else in the organisation has. So, if a situation arises where YOUR advice is needed for a decision to be made, then what you say carries a lot of weight.

This kind of authority is easy to recognise if we think about certain jobs in an organisation. Let's take the Safety Officer as an example.

It is his job to know more about what is or is not a safe thing to do than anybody else in the organisation and AS FAR AS SAFETY MATTERS ARE CONCERNED he has very considerable authority and can, for instance, stop production if necessary.

His specialist authority

* extends throughout the organisation

* ONLY applies to safety - his specialist area

ACTIVITY 14
Time guide
3 mins

Write down at least one other person in your organisation who has specialist authority - that is who has authority throughout the organisation for a special kind of work.

* _____

* _____

Well, it might be quite a long list. You might have mentioned:

* personnel officer

* legal officer

* accountant

* management services officer

Specialist functions such as Personnel tend to be set up once the organisation becomes too large for all parts of the work to be handled by the existing managers. Thus, in a small firm, probably the production manager will advertise for, interview and select new staff as he needs them.

In a larger organisation though this would be done by the Personnel Department, in cooperation with the section supervisor, we hope, since he would know precisely the sort of person required. The supervisor, in turn, would need and depend on the advice of the Personnel department in matters such as wages and conditions of service.

We can see how the specialist authority of the Personnel department operates in this example.

ACTIVITY 15
Time guide
2 mins

Suppose one of your workteam has several times seriously disobeyed company regulations. You have given him a verbal warning and an official reprimand, but the disciplinary problem continues.

Why can't you do more about it?

* _____

_____

You can't do any more about it because it is outside the limits of your authority. The personnel manager alone may have the authority to decide whether or not to dismiss the workteam member in question. And, in making that decision, he is exercising authority OUTSIDE his own department. This can sometimes restrict the authority within departments of line managers and supervisors and problems can result unless everybody is careful to build up a cooperative relationship and to appreciate the demands of each other's jobs.

So specialist authority means the authority of a specialist function to advise other functions in an organisation and, within the limits of the specialist area (eg safety) to exercise official authority throughout the organisation.

But we can take another view of that specialist authority is as well.

We've already agreed that specialist authority is derived from the specialist skill or knowledge that you have. So the safety officer, because of his specialist knowledge on safety matters, has the authority to direct individuals on safety procedures.

But what about the person who simply becomes more expert than anybody else at his particular job?

We could say that this individual is an authority on how best to do that particular job. Although he has no official authority, no right to direct others, his technical skill and expertise should be recognised and used to the full.

Quite possibly some members of your workteam can do certain tasks better than you can. As LEADER of the team, however, your job is to make sure your team meets the targets and makes the best use of the resources available - including team members' skills. You don't necessarily have to be best at each task yourself.

ACTIVITY 16
Time guide
4 mins

Jot down some of the benefits which are likely to arise from your recognising and using the special skills and expertise of members of your workteam.

* _____

* _____

* _____

* _____

If you recognise and use their special skills and experience, perhaps by asking for their advice, you will

* improve the confidence of the workteam member concerned

* obtain the respect of the workteam

* increase the amount of cooperation and support you can expect from your workteam members

* be more able to rely on sound advice in future to back up your own judgement

---

ACTIVITY 17
Time guide
4 mins

Spend a few minutes thinking about the people you work with and jot down one or two examples of people who have specialist authority in the sense we've just been looking at - that is that, although they may have no official authority, they have a special knowledge of their job which gives them authority within the organisation.

* _____

* _____

* _____

* _____

Who you think of in response to this activity will depend entirely on your own job but you might have suggested something like:

* a computer operator or programmer who can always help you to get the information you want

* a machine operator who understands how his machine works better than anybody else

* a technician who understands complex electronic systems in your work area

Unlike official authority, specialist authority in this sense is not delegated. It doesn't come about through your position in the organisation structure. It is acquired by your own particular skill, knowledge or experience. It is the recognition of your expertise which is accepted by others who respect your ability or knowledge and obey your instructions because of this.

So we've seen that a supervisor will have official authority, may have specialist authority but also needs another kind of authority - personal authority.

4 Personal Authority

It's probably your personal authority which is most effective in gaining the cooperation of your workteam.

A supervisor's personal authority is an individual thing. It is the acceptance of your decisions, orders or instructions by your workteam because you told them. Not because of your position in the organisation, or because of your skill but because of the respect they have for you.

ACTIVITY 18
Time guide
2 mins

If a workteam have a high regard for their supervisor do you think they will:

* question his instructions and decisions because they know him well enough to argue with

* do what he asks but complain about him behind his back

* usually carry out orders without question?

Usually, if regard for the supervisor is high, the workteam will carry out his decisions without question, respecting his personal authority as the boss. It isn't necessarily anything to do with liking. And if the whole workteam recognises the personal authority of the supervisor, then there isn't likely to be much complaining behind his back.

So how do we achieve personal authority?

The simple answer is

YOU EARN IT

which isn't always easy.

Clarence Francis, Chairman of General Foods Corporation, commented:

> "You can buy a man's time. You can even buy a certain number of skilled muscular motions per hour or day. But you cannot buy enthusiasm, you cannot buy initiative, you cannot buy loyalty. You have to earn these things."

Being a supervisor does not give you the right to expect enthusiasm, initiative or loyalty from your workteam. These things should follow from their acceptance of you as leader and the way in which you use your qualities of leadership.

EXTENSION 3
page 69

We tend to recognise qualities of leadership in other people but quite what it it is not easy to pin down. But in any unorganised group of people a natural leader will develop.

* at the scene of an accident someone will inevitably take charge

* in any group with a problem someone will start to direct the others towards solving the problem

The rest follow because they respect that leadership and accept the personal authority of the leader.

ACTIVITY 19
Time guide
5 mins

Spend a few minutes thinking about what qualities you think you need to achieve personal authority with your workteam.

(It might help to think about somebody you've worked for at some time for whom you've had a high regard.)

Jot down five qualities.

* loyalty
* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____

A supervisor needs to exercise simple human qualities to build personal relationships with members of the workteam. A good personal relationship wil earn their respect and they will accept the supervisor's personal authority.

Some of the important things are:

* loyalty
* interest
* initiative
* tact and courtesy
* decisiveness
* fairness
* integrity
* friendliness
* confidence

You may have chosen five from my list or you may have come up with some alternatives.

Let's look at the items on that list more closely and see how they build up the relationship between the supervisor and the workteam.

4.1 Loyalty

As a supervisor the best way to get loyalty from your workteam is to be loyal yourself.

* loyal - to the members of your workteam

* loyal - to your manager

ACTIVITY 20
Time guide
3 mins

Supposing you hear another supervisor being very critical of his own boss to his workteam.

Jot down what you think the workteam are likely to feel about him.

* _____

* _____

* _____

The likelihood of their sympathising wholeheartedly with the criticisms he is making is very slim. Even if they appear to agree with him they are likely to take notice of his apparent disloyalty to his own boss and to be less inclined to show loyalty to him in future.

Don't forget that, to your workteam, you are management. And it never looks good for one part of management to be critical of another.

4.2 Interest

To win the respect of your workteam you need to show a genuine interest in them as people and take the trouble to remember what they tell you.

ACTIVITY 21
Time guide
3 mins

Of course, how much anybody wants you to know about them varies from one person to another. But spend a couple of minutes jotting down some of the things about your workteam members which you should get to know.

* their ambitions
* _____
* _____

I would add to that list

* their problems and worries
* details about their families
* their hobbies and interests

To do this means finding time to talk to each of them on a one-to-one basis occasionally and listening to their point of view.

4.3 Initiative

This means not waiting for someone else to take the lead. Do what needs doing now and look out for better ways of doing things.

This sort of attitude is contagious in a group. If you show initiative you'll probably find that your workteam will do the same.

4.4 Tact and Courtesy

This is the knack of saying the right things at the right time and always being polite to the people you are talking to - treating them in fact as you would like to be treated by your boss.

ACTIVITY 22
Time guide
2 mins

Jot down what you think is the difference between tact and courtesy.

* _____

Tact really depends on finding time for people - showing thoughtfulness for them and their feelings rather than just pressing on with concerns of your own.

Courtesy is a matter of treating others with respect. Even if they're not very important to you they are to themselves.

ACTIVITY 23
Time guide
8 mins

Mary Smith, a sewing machinist at Separates Ltd has turned in to work today feeling tired and under the weather. It's hardly surprising when you consider that she spent most of the night at the hospital where her husband Tom was taken after an accident late last evening. Having assured herself that the situation is not too serious she decided that going to work might keep her mind off things.

After approximately half an hour at work Jenny, Mary's supervvisor, came over to talk to her.

The conversation went something like this.

Jenny: Good morning Mary. How are you? Alright?

Mary: Well actually Tom's been rushed to hospital and I've been up most of the night and I'm . . .

Jenny: Sorry to hear that. Now about this order for Bainwicks. I'll need another fifty blouses by 4 o'clock. If you get your head down they should be ready by then.

Must keep the customer happy. Eh?

Mary: I'm not sure . . .

Jenny: Look I've got to see Harry in stores. If you run into problems see me later.

What do you think Jenny did wrong?

* _____

_____

Which of the qualities mentioned earlier has Jenny ignored?

* _____

How should Jenny have handled the situation?

* _____

_____

Jenny has ignored Mary as an individual. She has shown a complete lack of interest in Mary's problems. Getting the orders out is more important to Jenny than Mary's feelings.

Jenny even suggests that Mary can see her later if she has any problems having just ignored the problem she has now.

Jenny has forgotten that supervisors need to take a personal interest in members of their workteam; that this interest will help build up a good relationship and that individuals will respect her for showing an interest and as such will respect her authority by accepting instructions more readily. So she lacked interest, initiative and tact.

The situation also gave Jenny the opportunity to show intitiative not only to Mary but to other members of the workteam and to change the allocation of jobs which she had planned so that Mary wasn't under pressure.

Jenny failed to recognise that Mary had a problem. Had she recognised the problem it was an ideal opportunity to show that she cared by taking some positive action such as

* asking more questions about Tom

* finding out if Mary was really all right

* finding out if she could help in any way

* getting someone else to do the order.

By showing that she cared Jenny would have improved her relationship with the whole workteam. They would respect Jenny more in future so that the relationship between supervisor and workteam would improve.

This is how the conversation might have gone if Jenny had made a better job of it.

Jenny: Good morning Mary. How are you?

Mary: Well actually Tom's been rushed to hopsital and I've been up most of the night and I'm feeling a bit tired this morning.

Jenny: I'm sorry to hear that. Is Tom alright?

Mary: He's got a borken leg and slight concussions so they're keeping him in for observation. But they said he'll be fine. No serious damage.

Jenny: How did it happen?

Mary: He fell off his motor bike. Skidded on some ice he thinks.

Jenny: And how about you? Wouldn't you rather be at home resting?

Mary: I'll be alright. I'd rather be at work, help me keep my mind off things. Anyway there is nothing I can do by staying at home.

4.6 Fairness

A supervisor must be seen to be fair to all members of the workteam which isn't always easy. What seems to be fair to the supervisor may look like favouritism to the workteam.

Here's an example of the sort of problem I mean.

ACTIVITY 24
Time guide
3 mins

Suppose two members of your workteam want some time off. One of them is a good worker, always on time and seldom asks for any time off. The other is frequently asking for time off and is quite fond of taking the odd day off without permission.

You decide that you could afford one being away but not both.

Which one would you give the time off?

* _____

This isn't an easy problem to solve.

If you decide on the first the other may accuse you of favouritism. If you decide on the second the first will think that is unfair since that person frequently gets time off.

Should you decide neither, this may also be seen as unfair with both people thinking that he can't have time off because of the other one.

In this situation perhaps the best thing to do is to give most consideration to the first person, who is seldom off. But to avoid confict, you would have to explain to the other workteam member that he has had a lot of time off recently and it's unfair to expect the rest of the workteam to keep covering for him.

You always need to ask yourself:

> "If I do <u>this</u>, what effect will it have on the rest of the workteam"

and judge each case on its merits.

We can sum up being fair as:

GET THE FACTS

EXAMINE THE EFFECTS ON OTHERS

AVOID FAVOURITISM

BE <u>SEEN</u> TO BE FAIR

4.7 Integrity

Integrity at work involves two things:

being honest

being consistent

In this case, it's an honesty with yourself and your workteam and is usually seen as facing up to the facts rather than evading them or trying to fob people off with half a story.

Being consistent means making sure that your attitude is broadly similar from one day to the next rather than changing with your mood. It's no good being strict one day and then very easy-going the next just because you feel like it. Your workteam need to know how to approach you and what to expect of you.

4.8 Friendliness

As well as being leader of the workteam you're also part of it and your attitude influences the attitude of the rest. So if you're friendly, the attitude of the workteam is likely to be friendly which makes life easier all round.

It's also a question of looking out for the good points in your workteam and giving praise whenever it's due rather than criticising what's not right.

The workteam will be more willing to accept your direction if they know you are aware of the effort they are making.

4.9 Confidence

We all look for confidence in a leader but quite what it is is sometimes difficult to pin down.

ACTIVITY 25
Time guide
3 mins

Think of somebody you know at work who you would say is 'quietly confident' and jot down three points about the way they behave which lead you to think they are confident.

* _____

* _____

* _____

Well, as we said, confidence is a hard quality to pin down though it is likely to be evident, if you have it, in your manner, your actions, what you say - in fact in everything you do.

Perhaps the first feature is a thorough knowledge of the job and a belief in your ability to do it. (But not too arrogant or cocky a belief in your own ability!)

Confidence also shows in your ability to get on with the job. Or, putting it the other way round, if you are very hesitant it shows a lack of confidence which your workteam will find it hard to respect.

Finally, confidence shows in being able to accept that you are human too. You make mistakes sometimes and don't pretend otherwise or you have the grace and confidence to accept that somebody else's opinion is better than yours.

The people who use official authority just to show they are in charge or put up a barrier between themselves and their workteam, difficult though they may be to get on with, are usually weak, insecure and lacking in confidence.

ACTIVITY 26
Time guide
5 mins

Here's a situation where a supervisor's personal authority is put on the line. How would you have coped?

At a management meeting the supervisors were told that some cut-backs were to be made in staffing levels. No decision has yet been made on which sections but information would be available as soon as decisions are reached. Supervisors were instructed to keep this quiet until an announcement is made. Inspite of the request rumour has got around.

John Hill, supervisor in stores, has said nothing to the storemen but is approached by them and asked if the rumour is true.

If you were John Hill, what would you say to the storemen when they asked you about the rumour?

* _____

_____

_____

This is a very difficult situation - one in which there isn't any one right answer.

John has had his own instructions from management to say nothing about the proposed staff reductions and he has as far as possible to obey those instructions.

So what can he say?

If he says 'There's nothing to it, you don't want to listen to rumours' he is wilfully misleading his workteam and, although they may feel reassured at the time, they would rapidly lose confidence in his word and respect for his personal authority when announcements about staff reductions were made. 'I'm sorry, I can't tell you anything' does nothing to reassure the workteam and suggests that John does know something which he won't discusss. In fact, he doesn't know much more than anybody else.

Perhaps the best he can say is something like 'Well, staffing levels are being looked at but I don't think anything has been decided. Certainly I haven't been told anything. I can't help you, I'm afraid, but as soon as I hear anything, you'll be the first to know."

And then, of course, he has to make sure that, as far as he is able, his workteam are the first to know once the information is available.

You may have thought of a different and better response to this situation. Certainly it would take some hard thinking about at the time and a careful and considered choice of words to be fair to his commitment to the firm and to his workteam.

So personal authority is something you have to work at, sometimes over a long period, and once you've earned it, it has to be maintained if your workteam are to continue to respect you.

Once you've got it, however, you will find that your workteam will be more cooperative, hard working, more effective because of you as an individual, your style of leadership and you will be able to use this to your advantage. They will accept your personal authority and you can rely less on the need to show official authority to get things done.

SELF CHECK 2
Time guide
5 mins

Complete the following three sentences with a suitable word or words.

(a) Official authority is the direct result of a supervisor's _____ in the organisation structure.

(b) A supervisor must always operate within the _____ of authority delegated by higher management.

(c) Any individual in an organisation may have _____ authority.

(d) Official authority is delegated. Specialist authority is acquired. But personal authority has to be _____.

(e) Make a list of FIVE qualities of a supervisor that will improve your personal authority at work.

* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____

Respond to the following questions by selecting which answer you feel is most correct.

(f) The kind of confidence required to supervise effectively is best described as:

(a) The ability to take people into your confidence
(b) An arrogant or cocky confidence
(c) A quiet confidence based on knowledge
(d) An aggressive confidence

(g) Which of the following qualities is most important in a supervisor?

(a) Intelligence
(b) Rank or position
(c) Technical competence
(d) Loyalty

The answer to this self check is here in the following words, so you'll need to check out your answers carefully. (a) Each level of manager represents a different level of authority in the organisation structure. It is this position in the organisation which determines the level of authority each person has. A supervisor is a first-line manager and this position entitles the supervisor to the authority necessary to direct the workteam. (b) Although supervisors have authority over the workteam, the existence of different levels of management limits the extent of authority that a supervisor will have. There will be some things that a supervisor can do and some things that the supervisor can't do. It is important that supervisors know the 'limits of authority' and always operate within those limits. (c) Specialist authority is acquired by having a specialist skill or knowledge. This isn't something which can be delegated and doesn't necessarily go with official authority. As supervisor you may have specialist knowledge of many aspects of the job and members of your workteam may be specialists with specialist authority in certain areas. Anybody can acquire specialist authority by becoming recognised as an expert at their job. (d) As supervisor you cannot be given or acquire personal authority. You must earn personal authority by gaining the respect of your workteam. The correct word to complete the sentence would be 'earned'. (e) You may have chosen any five of the ten that were given in the text. Thee were loyalty, initiative, tact and courtesy, integrity, confidence, interest, decisiveness, fairness and friendliness. You may also have used words like honest, firmness, dependable, persistent, cooperative, enthusiastic and adaptable. As I said earlier the list is not complete. Those mentioned were just some of the more common qualities which people agree on. (f) A quietly confident approach is usually the most effective when dealing with your workteam. Therefore (c) a quiet confidence based on knowledge, is the best answer. Arrogance and aggressiveness will usually be treated with contempt by the workteam and will result in a loss of respect for the supervisor. (g) An intelligent and competent supervisor may be important but these qualities will be overlooked if the workforce find the supervisor to be disloyal: (d) loyalty is one of the prime qualities of any leader and as the supervisor is leader of the workteam it is important that the group, both leader and team, are loyal to one another.

6 Summary

* A supervisor has three types of authority:

OFFICIAL AUTHORITY	delegated with the job in order to fulfil the responsibility of the job
SPECIALIST AUTHORITY	acquired through skill and expertise in the job. Anybody can become an expert in their particular job.
PERSONAL AUTHORITY	gained when your workteam respect you as a leader because you are: * loyal * interested * show initiative * tactful and courteous * decisive * fair * honest and consistent * friendly * confident

The greater your personal authority, the less you need to rely on official or specialist authority to win the cooperation of your workteam.

PART C USING AUTHORITY EFFECTIVELY

1 Introduction

Earlier we looked at authority in some detail - what it is, where it comes from, its limits and the different types of authority that supervisors have. In getting things done at work it's how you use your authority that's most important. Getting the best out of your workteam means using authority effectively.

We have already seen in this unit that authority gives the supervisor the right to decide, the right to command and the right to enforce. In this section we will look at how you might use your authority in each of these ways.

2 Making decisions

EXTENSION 5
page 69

A common complaint among any workforce is that the boss, ie the supervisor or manager, cannot make decisions. Remarks like:

"I can't get an answer from him"

or

"He can't make up his mind"

or

"He wants time to think about it"

are very common.

As supervisor, you are expected to make decisions and your workteam are looking to you for leadership and support. If you can't give them the answers - who can?

So:

* give clear, uncomplicated decisions

* tackle problems as they arise

* give a straight answer to questions - even the difficult ones

Not every decision is a challenge of course. Once you're familiar with the job you can take routine decisions on a wide range of subjects in your stride.

ACTIVITY 27
Time guide
5 mins

Spend a few minutes thinking about what you do in a typical day at work and jot down some of the subjects you might have to make a decision about. The length of the list might surprise you!

* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____
* _____

This will obviously vary from one job to another but your list might well include:

* Training
* Discipline
* Work routines
* Tasks
* Maintenance
* Safety
* Materials
* Motivation
* Grievances
* Targets

Often, of course, all that is needed is a simple YES or NO answer to questions like:

"Shall I send this invoice today?"

"Do you need this by tea-time?"

"Shall I get those supplies now?"

However obvious the answer may be to you, the team member asking the question is looking for your guidance or approval and needs a straightforward answer wherever possible in order to get on with the job.

Other questions will be more involved and involve you in a bit of thought and fact-finding before you can give a decision. Here's an example:

"When can I have those materials you promised me?"

ACTIVITY 28
Time guide
2 mins

Jot down a couple of questions you might need to find answers to before you could give the workteam member who asked you this question a decision.

* _____

_____

* _____

_____

You'd probably need to ask the following questions at least - you may well have thought of others:

Where are the materials?

What's holding them up?

How long will it take?

How much material have you got left?

So you need to identify exactly what the problem is before you can give an answer and you may have to delay giving an answer until you've checked out the details.

In such cases it's important that you do follow things up. Then tell your workteam member when they can expect a decision and have the decision ready when they come for it.

Some decisions, of course, simply aren't easy to take. Let's look at this model which gives us one way in which we can reach a decision, no matter what the problem may be.

IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM	Have you got all the facts? Have you got to the heart of the problem? eg Is it a personality clash? Is it to do with work or caused by something outside work?
DEVELOP POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS	Find as many possible ways of solving the problem as you can
WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF . . .	Think through what would be likely to happen for each of the possible solutions you thought of. Try to anticipate what could go wrong as well as what could go right.
SELECT WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE BEST SOLUTION	There may not always be an obvious best solution. You may have to settle for the least damaging.
ANTICIPATE ANY NEW PROBLEMS	Are any new problems likely to arise from your decision? If so, identify the problem and use the model again!

Let's see how we could apply this approach to decision-making to the problem we looked at just now over two of your workteam who persistently argue.

ACTIVITY 29
Time guide
3 mins

Here's the situation again:

Two members of your workteam are continually bickering and arguing with one another. They just don't seem to be able to work together. You have noticed that they argue over job-related matters and frequently accuse each other of interfering in each other's job. They are very uncooperative towards each other and their behaviour is affecting other members of the workteam.

Taking the first stage of the decision-making model, jot down how you would identify he problem.

* _____

On the evidence you have, what do you think the problem is?

* _____

_____

I think you would probably want to talk to them both in some detail. Just having a word with them in itself might help, but you also need to find out more about the problem.

The real problem seems to be related to the job they each do since they argue about work and accuse each other of interference. Maybe there's a clash of responsibilities.

The effect on morale isn't itself the problem - the root of the problem lies with the two people in question.

So, having got as much information as possible and identified the problem, we have to think of possible solutions.

ACTIVITY 30
Time guide
3 mins

You are fairly certain the problem arises from the job and from their uncertainty about exactly what they're responsible for.

Jot down any more possible solutions to the problem you can think of in addition to those you thought of first time.

* _____

_____

_____

Jot down briefly what you think the consequences of TWO of these possible solutions would be. (In practice you should do this for every possible solution. We'll just take two to save time.)

* _____

_____

* _____

_____

In addition to the possible solutions we thought of before we can now probably think of re-organising their jobs. We'd probably have to examine their job descriptions or write a new job description for each of them to do this.

If you move one of them out of your section, you may solve the immediate problem but which one would you send?

Would that be seen to be quite fair?

How would you replace him?

What expertise would you lose when he went?

Would such a move improve the morale of the rest of the team?

If you re-organise their jobs will it in fact solve their differences?

Will anybody else's job be affected?

Do you want them to do something for which they need training?

Are they really suitable for what you want them to do or are you overlooking somebody else?

These are just two possibilities. You may have taken a different line.

Then we'd have to select what seemed to be the best solution and look in detail at any new problems which might arise. For instance, if we decided to re-organise their jobs and write a new job description, we'd have to double check that every task had been included and thus avoid the problem of their each avoiding a certain job because it wasn't directly referred to in the job description.

We have also to remember that we've been looking at this problem in isolation. In practice, you deal with problems in the light of what is usually done in your workplace. There may be well established rules, procedures or customs which will have to be taken into account and which will strongly influence the decision you reach.

All this may seem a lot of work.

Sometimes you might not need to go through every stage of the decision-making process (there may seem to be only one possible solution for instance) but the one certain thing is that the problem that you only half-solve today will come back tomorrow - quite possibly worse than it was before!

And, of course, having made a decision, you have to follow it up and see whether that decision has worked well. That way you build up a store of knowledge and experience to draw on next time a similar problem arises and you have to make another decision.

Now let's look at another way in which you can use your authority effectively - the way you give orders.

3 Giving orders

EXTENSION 6
page 70

Authority gives the supervisor the right to command. This means giving orders and instructions to your workteam. In other words telling people what to do.

You can do this in various ways.

Here are four ways of getting the message across.

3.1 Kinds of orders

* command (ie "Do this")
* request (ie "Will you do this?")
* suggestion (ie "How can we do that?)
* asking for a volunteer (ie "Now then who's going to do?")

Which of these methods you use depends on two things

* the situation
* the individual

Before we look at these two situations let's look at different types of orders.

ACTIVITY 31
Time guide
3 mins

Below are five instructions or orders which a supervisor may give to members of the workteam.

(1) "Have those invoices ready by lunchtime today."

_____

(2) "I need an extra man to work in stores today."

_____

(3) "Would those shoes look better on the bottom shelf?"

_____

(4) "I'd like the new stock priced and put on display straightaway . . . Can you see to that John?"

_____

In the space provided write down whether you think the order is:

(a) a command

(b) a request

(c) a suggestion

(d) asking for a volunteer

Let's have a look at each of these in turn.

(1) "Have those invoices ready by lunchtime today".

This is a direct command. It is clear and explicit. The supervisor is telling someone exactly what to do. (a) a command is most correct.

(2) "I need an extra man in stores today".

Here the supervisor is looking for a volunteer. You might also see this as being as suggestion but in fact the supervisor is not looking for a suggestion from the workteam. Ideally the supervisor wants someone in the workteam to volunteer for stores duty. The best answer then is (d) the volunteer or voluntary method.

(3) "Would these shoes look better on the bottom shelf?"

In this order the supervisor is making a suggestion. The supervisor is allowing the workteam member to give a point of view rather than direct them. It would have been possible to use a different approach. Such as "Put those shoes on the bottom shelf", or "Will you move those shoes to the bottom shelf?". This order is (c) a suggestion.

(4) "I'd like the new stock priced and put on display straightaway . . . Can you see to that?"

Here the supervisor is making a request. "Can you see to that?" is not a direct approach nor is it a suggestion that the workteam member should see to it. The order is in the form of a request. The supervisor is asking. The workteam member could respond either 'yes' or 'no' but at least the supervisor will know whether the job is being done or not. The answer here is (b) request.

Now let's look at how you might use these methods of giving orders. Earlier I said that the method you use depends on:

* the situation

* the individual

3.2 The Situation

Firstly what do we mean by the situation? Well, in general this refers to the conditions operating at the time the order is given. For example, an emergency, such as a fire is one situation whereas an everyday routine job is an entirely different situation.

So how do we match our approach to different situations?

ACTIVITY 32
Time guide
3 mins

Here are four different kinds of order.

Beneath each one jot down what you think are the key factors which make that particular order right for the situation it's used in.

(a) A command - "Phone for an ambulance and get the nurse down here immediately."

* _____

_____

(b) A request - "Do you think you could finish that by lunchtime please."

* _____

_____

(c) A suggestion - "Do you think those would look better on the bottom shelf?"

* _____

_____

(d) Asking for a volunteer - "Who's going to clean out the vans? I'd like two people to work on Saturday morning."

* _____

_____

(a) I hope we can agree that the key factors in

"Phone for an ambulance and get the nurse down here immediately."

are that it is

* an emergency

* action is needed immediately

In these circumstances people will respond well to a direct order.

(b) "Do you think you could finish that by lunchtime please?"

The key factor here seems to be that this is a routine job without undue pressure. An order would do ("Get that done by lunchtime") but in normal circumstances people prefer to be asked, not told to do something.

(c) "Do you think those would look better on the bottom shelf?"

The key factors here are that

* the workteam have a chance to use their own initiative

* their opinion is invited

* the supervisor has shown confidence in them by letting them choose how to do it.

This method improves the morale of the workteam but you may not always like or expect what they do. It's important to check up afterwards.

(d) "Who's going to clean out the vans? I'd like two people to work on Saturday morning."

The key factor seems to be that this is an unpopular, unusual and possibly dirty job.

A direct command will cause resentment or seem unfair so it is better to get members of your workteam to volunteer. They can hardly complain later that they have to do the job and the supervisor has the opportunity to show his appreciation. This improves the relationship between the supervisor and the workteam.

ACTIVITY 33
Time guide
3 mins

Have a look at the situations listed below and decide which approach you would take in dealing with each.

Situations	Approach
(a) The office manager wants the sales figures.	_____
(b) The stairway is cluttered with empty boxes.	_____
(c) The cleaner is ill and the kitchen in the office needs tidying.	_____
(d) You are not sure the job couldn't be done better another way.	_____

I hope you found that each of the situations require a different approach. I'll go through each situation and give you my view of how I would deal with it. I'll explain why I've made this choice and hope that you can see the situation in the same way.

Situation 1 The sales manager wants the sales figures.

I would use the request in this situation. This is a fairly routine task which the supervisor would not give orders about. A polite requesting approach to a member of the workteam is the best way to get the desired response. Your order may be

"Mr Jones needs these sales figures . . . Will you take them along to him?"

This approach is much better than the sharp command such as

"Take these sales figures to Mr Jones."

Situation 2 The stairway is cluttered with empty boxes.

This situation must be dealt with urgently. Boxes on stairs are a safety hazard. Any member of the workteam may be injured by falling over them. In the event of fire those boxes could cause a major obstruction. A direct command is best in this situation. Your order may be

"Clear those boxes off the stairway now before someone is injured."

Situation 3 The cleaner is ill and the kitchen in the office needs tidying.

Tidying the kitchen isn't really the job of any of the office staff so it's an unusual situation and you are asking for help outside the run of the workteam's normal duties. I would ask for a volunteer in this case - and make sure that I thanked them personally when the job was done. Or, if your workteam knew you well and were likely to cooperate perhaps a suggestion would be sufficient. You might say something like:

"Kath is off sick and the kitchen's in a bit of a mess. I'd be grateful if somebody would tidy up a bit."

Situation 4 You are not sure the job couldn't be done better another way.

If you're not sure which way best to do the job, presumably you would welcome some other opinions. Perhaps there is somebody in your workteam with more experience than you who could give you some good advice and the opinion the workteam have of you may go up if you are big enough to accept advice with a good grace. So perhaps you could say something like:

'We'd better do this one the same as normal - unless you've got some ideas about how we could do it better, have you?'.

3.3 The Individual

We also need to vary the way we give orders to suit the people we are dealing with. In time, of course, you get to know your workteam well and learn which method suits their personalities and yours best.

ACTIVITY 34
Time guide
4 mins

Beside each of the descriptions of somebody who might work for you, write down which kind of order you think they would respond to best:

a command

a request

a suggestion

asking for a volunteer

(a) somebody rather slow on the up-take and inclined to be idle if you don't watch. _____

(b) somebody who has been in the workteam longer than you and who has a great deal of useful experience. _____

(c) a fairly recent addition to the workteam who is quite competent in the routine jobs and always polite to you and the rest of the team. _____

(d) somebody new and keen, looking for a challenge. _____

Well, opinions may vary but I would match orders to these people like this:

(a) a command

This method is best used with those members of your workteam whom you cannot always rely on to get things done. You need to be firm and positive in your approach. Instead of saying "Can you finish that job by 4 o'clock please" you might say "Make sure you're finished by 4 o'clock".

There's no doubt about how long the workteam member has got to finish the job.

(b) a suggestion	You need his knowledge and experience to get the job done successfully and he will probably respect the confidence you place in him.
(c) a request	Most people prefer this approach and appreciate the respect it implies.
(d) a suggestion	This is an excellent way of dealing with people who have real initiative. A suggestion that somthing needs doing is all that is needed to set them off and they'll get the job done if you leave them to it. You can do this by saying things like: "I'm not too happy about the layout of the stockroom" or "What we really need is to rearrange this stockroom". This approach sets a challenge to the workteam member. They have the opportunity to show real initiative, to feel important enough to put ideas into action and that the supervisor has confidence in them.

You notice that I don't ask for a volunteer though you might successfully have done this in (d). The trouble with this method is that the "willing horse" usually volunteers and some people never get any difficult jobs. Used too often this can backfire. That is the "willing horse" feels used and becomes "unwilling".

It's best to use this method infrequently so that such problems are avoided.

4 **Making sure orders are carried out**

As supervisor you have the authority to insist that your workteam carry out your instructions.

If they don't you're entitled to reprimand the people in question. This is bound to happen sometimes though, you hope, infrequently if your orders are:

* clear
* concise
* complete
* correct
* confident

And if you follow up to make sure the job is being done and done properly.

However, you have to make sure that your follow up isn't viewed with suspicion.

ACTIVITY 35
Time guide
2 mins

How would you react if somebody said to you:

"Did you move those boxes off the stairs that I asked you to?"

* _____

_____

I think I should feel that I wasn't really trusted and I should resent the implication that I might not have done it.

It may be better to say

"Are you having any problems with those boxes on the stairs?"

Here the supervisor's remarks assume that the job is being done and there's almost a suggestion of help if you need it.

This is a much more encouraging follow-up.

ACTIVITY 36
Time guide
3 mins

Here's a situation that you need to follow up to ensure that it will be completed on time.

You give John, a member of your workteam, the task of investigating a minor accident on the shopfloor. This is the instruction you give him.

"The production manager wants a report on that accident yesterday. Trouble is he wants it first thing in the morning. You were there when it happened, John. Would you mind getting the facts together for me? I'll need them by 4 o'clock so that I can put the report together tonight."

How might you follow this up without appearing too heavy-handed about it?

* _____

_____

_____

_____

What each of us individually would say will obviously vary but I think the best approach would be to make a point of "running into" John later on. A casual remark may be all that is needed to reassure you that he is doing the job. You could say something like:

"Having any trouble getting that information, John?"

This assumes that John is getting on and is an encouraging remark. Whereas, if you make an issue of it by making a remark like

"Have you got that information yet, John?"

you may give John the feeling that he is doing the job too slowly or that you don't trust him and are "chasing him up".

On the other hand when orders are disobeyed or not carried out you must do something about it and may use your authority to discipline a workteam member.

The most common type of discipline a supervisor will use is a simple reprimand, although what that actually comprises will, once again, depend on the individual and the situation.

For example:

to a very sensitive member of your workteam the suggestion that he has done something wrong may be effective, whereas a good, direct talking-to may be necessary with the lazy or thick-skinned member.

Whichever approach you use the important thing is that it should be constructive. Your aim is to bring about

AN IMPROVEMENT IN PERFORMANCE

not to humiliate, hurt or annoy the person in question.

As in the rest of your dealings with your workteam, you have to be

* firm
* friendly
* fair

In fact, that's a good model for any supervisor who hopes to be respected and seen to be effective by his workteam and by management.

SELF CHECK 3
Time guide
8 mins

Decide whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE.

(a) A supervisor must always be decisive.

_____

(b) A supervisor must always give an instant decision.

_____

(c) A supervisor should always consider the individual when giving orders.

_____

(d) A request is the best approach to take when dealing with emergencies.

_____

(e) Good supervisors rely mainly on volunteers to get things done.

_____

Respond by selecting the one answer you feel is most correct.

(f) Which of the following is best used in an emergency.

(a) command
(b) request
(c) suggestion
(d) volunteer

(g) The suggestion approach is best when dealing with

(a) routine work
(b) disinterested members of your work
(c) workteam members who show initiative
(d) unusually dirty jobs

Complete the following statements with a suitable word or words.

(h) When giving orders the approach or method you use will depend on the _____ and the _____ concerned.

(i) A supervisor should _____ orders to ensure they are being carried out properly.

(j) When orders are not carried out the supervisor should _____ the person concerned.

The answer to this self check is here in the following words, so you'll need to check out your answers carefully. (a) Decision-making is one of the main reasons why a supervisor has been given authority. It is important that a supervisor makes decisions when required and is seen to be making decisions even if it isn't always possible to give an answer on the spot. So this statement is true. b) It's not always possible to give an instant decision - you may need more information before you can make a well-informed decision. The point is that you must make a decision at some stage and tell your workteam as far as you can when you will make it. So this statement is false. c) When giving orders the supervisor should consider both the situation and the individual. The statement is true. The supervisor should always consider the individual. This will help decide the approach to be used. For example a command may be best if you feel that a member of your workteam is likely to forget. You need to be firm and positive. Whereas, if you know you can rely on someone to do the job properly a request or even suggestion may be better. d) An emergency, such as fire, or accident needs a firm, positive approach. There is no time to think about personal feelings. The supervisor must act quickly. A direct command is the best way to do this. So this statement is false. e) Good supervisors do not rely on any particular method. A good supervisor will adapt to the situation and the individual. This statement is false. Of the four methods that could be used, asking for volunteers would probably be the least used. This should be used infrequently. j) My choice here is a) Command. The supervisor wants things done quickly. A firm, positive and direct approach is the best way to ensure that this is done. g) My choice here is c) work team members who show initiative. The suggestion approach allows them to develop things for themselves, give opinions and make suggestions on how things might be done. The workteam member will feel much more confident feeling that the supervisor trusts them to get on with it in their own way. h) The two words missing here are situation and individual. These two things need to be considered when giving orders. They are important in deciding the approach that the supervisor should take. i) To get things done properly and on time it's as well to "follow-up" your orders. Sometimes the work team member may have problems which they need help with or may have forgotten that you need it doing now. So by using a "follow-up" approach you can find these things out and if necessary give more help. j) You could use either one of two words here, discipline or reprimand. My choice would be reprimand. This is the most common form of discipline that a supervisor might use. It's important that you do not allow the situation to pass unnoticed.

5 Summary

* Decisions have to be clearly made, even if they only require YES or NO answers.

* More involved problems can be solved using a decision-making model. This involves five stages.

  - define problem
  - develop solutions
  - determine consequences
  - select most positive solutions
  - determine any new problems

* You can use four methods to give orders

  - the command
  - the request
  - the suggestion
  - asking for a volunteer

* Which method you use depends on:

  the situation
  the individual

* Orders must be followed-up - and followed up so that the workteam do not resent it.

* If orders are not carried out you may have to make a reprimand.

  This should be - fair
  firm
  friendly

* The aim of a reprimand is to bring about an improvement in behaviour, nothing else.

PART D PERFORMANCE CHECKS

1 End Checks

Time guide
60 mins

You may review your understanding of the unit as a whole by completing this group of questions. DON'T GUESS THE ANSWERS - if you're not sure look back into the unit and check before responding.

If your still unsure then put a question mark against your response before proceeding.

TRUE/FALSE

Respond to each statement by writing True or False in the space provided.

1 A supervisor must always operate within the 'Limits of authority' delegated by management. _____

2 A supervisor who doesn't delegate is usually insecure. _____

3 Personal authority is delegated to the supervisor by higher management. _____

4 Official authority reflects your position in the organisation structure. _____

5 A good supervisor should delay decisions as long as possible. _____

6 A direct command is the best way of giving orders. _____

7 Asking your work team to do things is a sign of weakness in a supervisor. _____

8 Making a suggestion is the best way to develop initiative and self confidence in members of your work team. _____

COMPLETION

Respond by completing each sentence with a suitable word or words.

9 Authority is _____ to a supervisor by management.

10 Having authority gives a supervisor the right to decide, the right to _____, and the right to enforce.

11 A supervisor may have three types of authority; official, _____ and personal.

12 Specialist authority is acquired through your _____ and _____ of the job.

13 The approach a supervisor uses to give orders depends on the _____ and the _____.

14 When dealing with emergencies a _____ is the best way of giving orders.

15 The most common form of discipline used by a supervisor is the _____.

16 Every work team member should be seen as an _____ when giving orders.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Respond to each of the following by selecting which answer you feel is most correct.

17 A supervisor is given authority:

a) to distinguish him from operators

b) to meet the responsibilities of the job

c) to influence the work team

d) as a reward for good work.

18 A supervisor is responsible for:

a) work which he chooses not to delegate to anybody ense

b) work which he delegates to other people

c) all the work which is delegated to him

d) everything which his immediate supervisor is responsible for.

19 The most important thing about decisions is:

a) to avoid yes/no answers

b) to make the decision quickly

c) to delay until you have time to think about it

d) never to say no to a request.

20 Which type of order would you use if you want to appear firm and positive:

a) volunteer

b) request

c) command

d) suggestions.

21 The request is best used

a) in times of danger

b) for dirty or dangerous jobs

c) to enforce discipline

d) for routine jobs.

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22 The reason for giving a reprimand is

a) to tear a strip off someone

b) to show who's in charge

c) to impress others in the work team

d) to improve future performance

23 Gaining the respect of the work team increases the supervisor's

a) personal authority

b) self regard

c) specialist authority

d) official authority.

END CHECK - Checkout

Audio Tape
Side 2
Time guide
35 mins

The answers and explanations for these End Checks are on Side 2 of our Audio Tape. Have your responses with you as you play this tape. As you listen you can check out how well you have done and make notes as you proceed.

2 Tutor Check

Julie Thompson comes out of the production manager's office and shrugs her shoulders.

> "Pressure, pressure, pressure - they're always wanting something more and there's always a rush on these days for some reason or other. Oh well, if it's that urgent we'll just have to use the pellets from DBC Plastics".

Julie is a production supervisor in Midlands Mouldings who make a wide range of moulded plastic components mainly for the electronics industry - things like calculators, radio and television cases and specialist plastic cases for industrial equipment. She usually spends five or ten minutes with the production manager first thing in the morning and this morning he had told her that some important customers were coming round the plant to see the production process. Whatever else, the line had to be running and plastic components being produced. What's more, they had just received an urgent order from Firstrate Ltd for 15,000 calculator cases by Friday. If they couldn't deliver by then, Firstrate would order elsewhere.

Julie had explained that they were low on standard raw materials unless they used some trial batches from a new supplier.

> The production manager had replied:
> "You're responsible for production. You've been on that line for five years - I back your judgement. Just keep the line running this afternoon and meet that order for Firstrate one way or another."

So Julie authorised the use of the trial batches of plastic pellets from DBC Plastics. The colour wasn't quite the same as the usual pellets but, made up, she thought the difference would be almost unnoticeable.

Half an hour later, Mike Simpson from Quality Control came down to the production area and told Julie to stop production using the DBC pellets.

"Sorry Mike they're the only pellets we've got and there's a rush on".

"You'll have to, Julie. They've got foreign particles in and the colour is out of specification. Anyway, we haven't used DBC for years and they'll have to go through the 'new supplier's procedure.' Sorry, Julie, I can't release the material."

"Never mind releasing it, Mike, we're already using it. We've used pellets where the colour has been further out of spec, and it's been alright before. And the boss says we've got to keep production running today whatever. Maybe there'll be more rejects than usual on finished mouldings but that's a chance we'll have to take".

THE CHOICE SERIES

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